RESEARCH REPORT

"Divided by Design: The Colonial and Missionary Roots of the Adivasi-Hindu Separation Narrative"

A source-based historical analysis of how British census policy, Christian missionary strategy, and foreign-funded organizations manufactured the "we are not Hindu" identity crisis among Adivasi communities in India.

AJEET SINGH BARMAN

(independent research)

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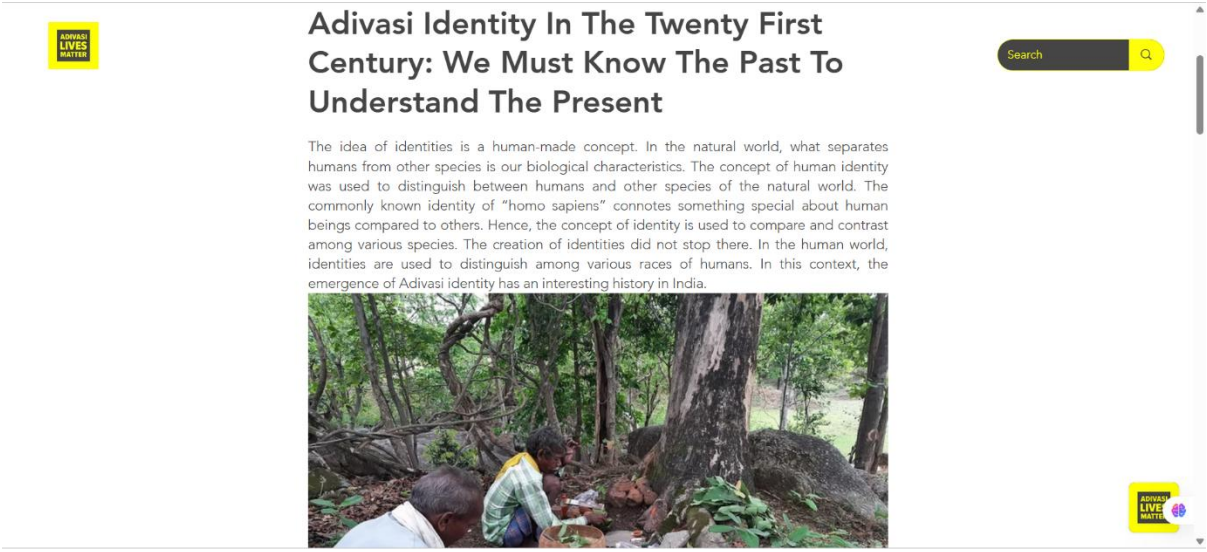
1. Who Are the Adivasis Originally?

Adivasis are the **oldest indigenous inhabitants** of India. They follow their own nature-based faith called **Animism** — worshipping mountains, rivers, trees, and ancestors. This is not separate from the broader Indian spiritual tradition; it is actually **its very root.**

2. What Happened During British Rule? (The Real Root of the Problem)

The British government, in the 1872 Census, labeled these communities as "Aboriginal Tribes and Semi-Hinduised Aboriginal Tribes." These were the first official labels given to separate these communities from caste-Hindu groups. (Reference:- https://www.adivasilivesmatter.com/post/adivasi-identity-in-the-twenty-first-century-we-must-know-the-past-to-understand-the-present)


Adivasi Identity In The Twenty First Century: We Must Know The Past To Understand The Present
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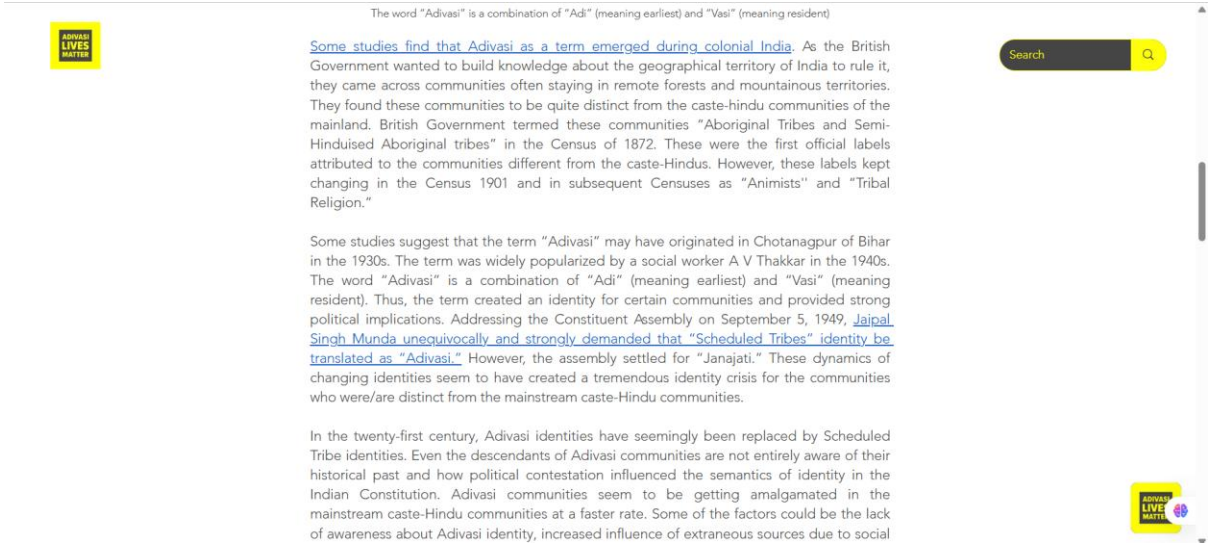
The idea of identities is a human-made concept. In the natural world, what separates humans from other species is our biological characteristics. The concept of human identity was used to distinguish between humans and other species of the natural world. The commonly known identity of "homo sapiens" connotes something special about human beings compared to others. Hence, the concept of identity is used to compare and contrast among various species. The creation of identities did not stop there. In the human world, identities are used to distinguish among various races of humans. In this context, the emergence of Adivasi identity has an interesting history in India.



The word "Adivasi" is a combination of "Adi" (meaning earliest) and "Vasi" (meaning resident)

Some studies find that Adivasi as a term emerged during colonial India. As the British Government wanted to build knowledge about the geographical territory of India to rule it, they came across communities often staying in remote forests and mountainous territories. They found these communities to be quite distinct from the caste-hindu communities of the mainland. British Government termed these communities "Aboriginal Tribes and Semi-Hinduised Aboriginal tribes" in the Census of 1872. These were the first official labels attributed to the communities different from the caste-Hindus. However, these labels kept changing in the Census 1901 and in subsequent Censuses as "Animists" and "Tribal Religion."

Some studies suggest that the term "Adivasi" may have originated in Chotanagpur of Bihar in the 1930s. The term was widely popularized by a social worker A V Thakkar in the 1940s. The word "Adivasi" is a combination of "Adi" (meaning earliest) and "Vasi" (meaning resident). Thus, the term created an identity for certain communities and provided strong political implications. Addressing the Constituent Assembly on September 5, 1949, Jaipal Singh Munda unequivocally and strongly demanded that "Scheduled Tribes" identity be translated as "Adivasi." However, the assembly settled for "Janajati." These dynamics of changing identities seem to have created a tremendous identity crisis for the communities who were/are distinct from the mainstream caste-Hindu communities.

In the twenty-first century, Adivasi identities have seemingly been replaced by Scheduled Tribe identities. Even the descendants of Adivasi communities are not entirely aware of their historical past and how political contestation influenced the semantics of identity in the Indian Constitution. Adivasi communities seem to be getting amalgamated in the mainstream caste-Hindu communities at a faster rate. Some of the factors could be the lack of awareness about Adivasi identity, increased influence of extraneous sources due to social

In the early period of British rule, the understanding of tribal populations was largely based on prevailing perceptions of locally Hinduised power groups. (https://books.openedition.org/pressesinalco/23721?lang=en)

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Représentations coloniales des passés des *Adivasi* du Jarkhand, Inde : les archives et au-delà

Sanjukta Das Gupta

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ABSTRACTS

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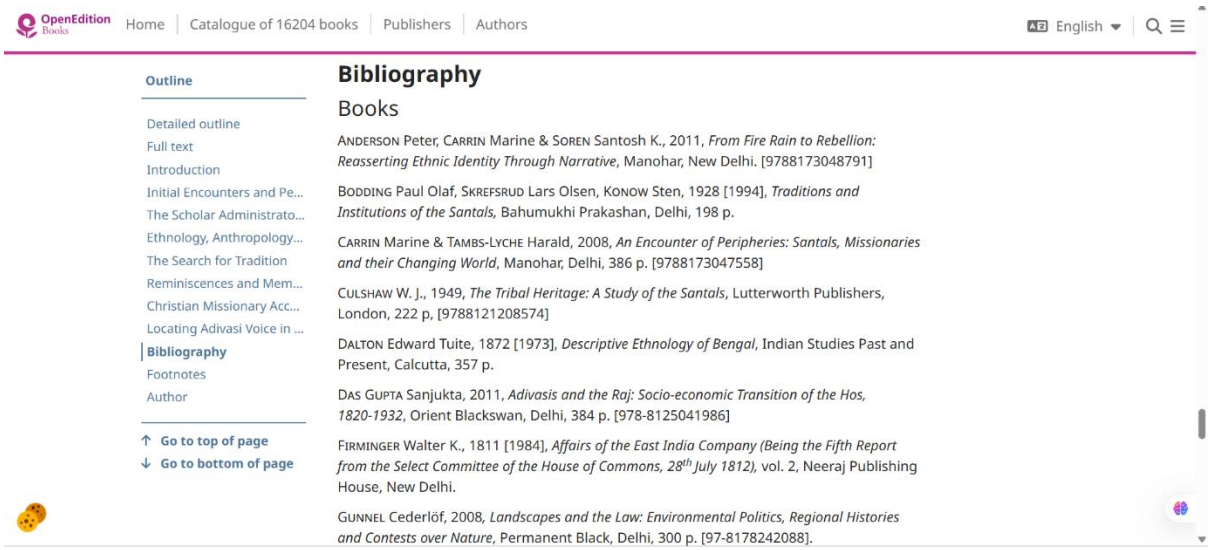
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The British applied their classic **"Divide and Rule"** strategy. They deliberately projected Adivasis as separate from the Hindu mainstream — making them easier targets for Christian missionaries and weakening the unity of Indian society.

† Entry of Christian Missionaries — Detailed Sources

🏴 Phase 1: Missionaries as Agents of Colonial Expansion

The missionary societies were functionaries of British society. The primary aim of these missionaries was the expansion of the colonial empire using religion. Christianity was introduced by the revision of the English East India Company's Charter in 1813 and 1833, and gradually it penetrated deep into backward and inaccessible tribal areas. The introduction of Christianity is closely associated with the expansion of colonization in India.

(Reference:- https://www.journalofpoliticalscience.com/uploads/archives/7-9-47-364.pdf)

The tribal society was not closely associated with any religion — they generally believed in nature's powers and local deities. The intentions of missionaries were always religious conversion; they were not there for any kind of reform. The colonial government wanted to control these tribal communities and also wanted access to those forests which were not accessible without their support.

This is a critical point: missionaries were tools of empire first, religion second.

🏫 Phase 2: The Strategy — Schools, Hospitals, Then Conversion

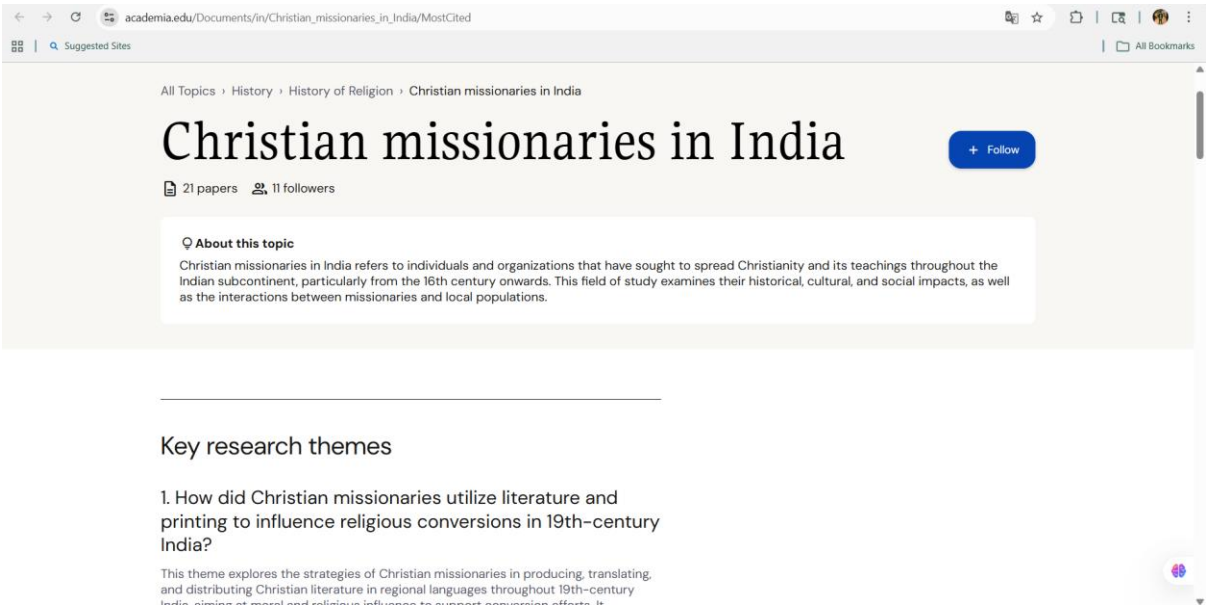
19th-century German missionaries, specifically the Gossner Lutherans, used Western education as a "civilizing strategy" to convert and raise tribal peoples in the Chota Nagpur plateau. They

carried out evangelization via schooling, evidencing their role as agents in the re-formation of indigenous society through print culture and education.

William Carey of the Baptist Missionary Society was the first missionary to come to eastern India in 1792. Schools and hospitals played a significant role in the process of Christianization. Christianization of tribals was offered as an escape mechanism from the caste system, and missionaries offered financial assistance to free tribals from the clutches of landlords and moneylenders.

(Reference-
https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Christian_missionaries_in_India/MostCited

https://www.academia.edu/43619080/Schooling_of_the_tribal_peoples_of_the_Chota_Nagpur_region_of_India_Contested_claims_by_German_missionaries_and_British_colonialists_S_Dutta)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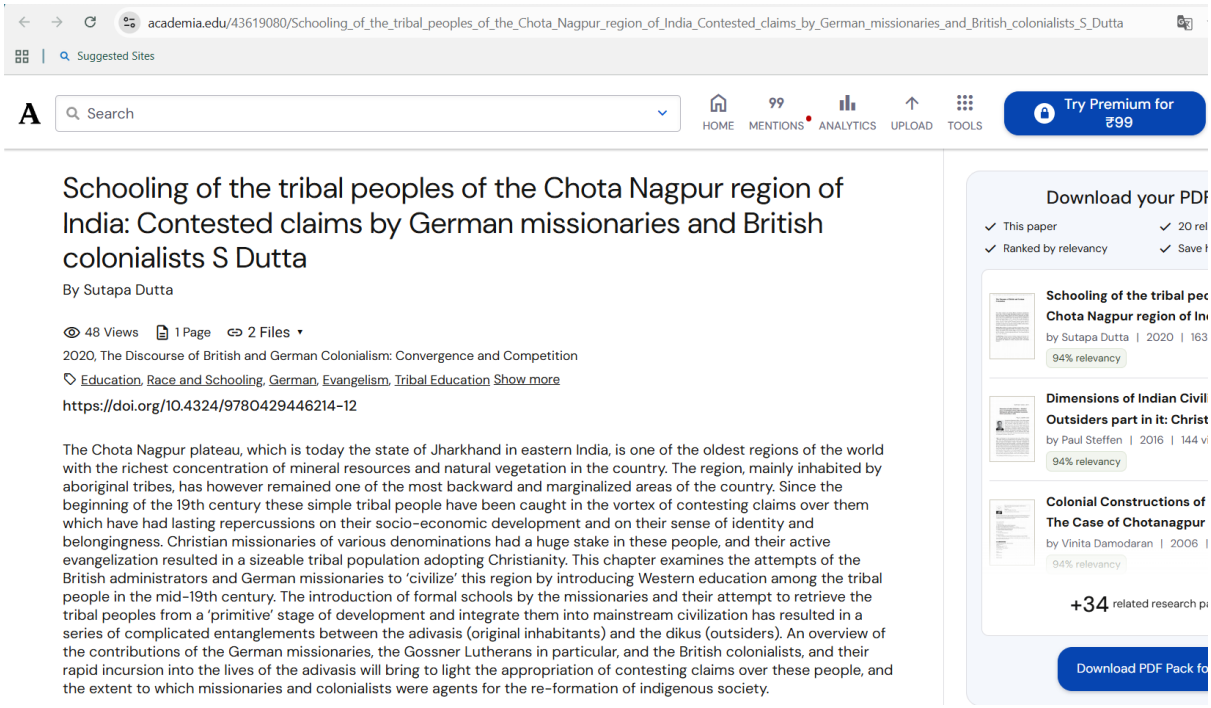
About this topic
Christian missionaries in India refers to individuals and organizations that have sought to spread Christianity and its teachings throughout the Indian subcontinent, particularly from the 16th century onwards. This field of study examines their historical, cultural, and social impacts, as well as the interactions between missionaries and local populations.
Key research themes
1. How did Christian missionaries utilize literature and printing to influence religious conversions in 19th-century India?
This theme explores the strategies of Christian missionaries in producing, translating, and distributing Christian literature in regional languages throughout 19th-century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Schooling of the tribal peoples of the Chota Nagpur region of India: Contested claims by German missionaries and British colonialists S Dutta
By Sutapa Dutta
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2020, The Discourse of British and German Colonialism: Convergence and Competition
Education, Race and Schooling, German, Evangelism, Tribal Education Show more
https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429446214-12
The Chota Nagpur plateau, which is today the state of Jharkhand in eastern India, is one of the oldest regions of the world with the richest concentration of mineral resources and natural vegetation in the country. The region, mainly inhabited by aboriginal tribes, has however remained one of the most backward and marginalized areas of the country. Since the beginning of the 19th century these simple tribal people have been caught in the vortex of contesting claims over them which have had lasting repercussions on their socio-economic development and on their sense of identity and belongingness. Christian missionaries of various denominations had a huge stake in these people, and their active evangelization resulted in a sizeable tribal population adopting Christianity. This chapter examines the attempts of the British administrators and German missionaries to 'civilize' this region by introducing Western education among the tribal people in the mid-19th century. The introduction of formal schools by the missionaries and their attempt to retrieve the tribal peoples from a 'primitive' stage of development and integrate them into mainstream civilization has resulted in a series of complicated entanglements between the adivasis (original inhabitants) and the dikus (outsiders). An overview of the contributions of the German missionaries, the Gossner Lutherans in particular, and the British colonialists, and their rapid incursion into the lives of the adivasis will bring to light the appropriation of contesting claims over these people, and the extent to which missionaries and colonialists were agents for the re-formation of indigenous society.
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The Case of Chotanagpur
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In short: they identified Adivasi pain points — poverty, landlord exploitation, illiteracy — and used service as a gateway to conversion.

🧠 Phase 3: Deliberately Separating Adivasis from Hindu Identity

This is the most important and well-documented part. The Niyogi Committee Report of 1956 — an official Government of India inquiry — is the most authentic source on this:

The Niyogi Committee Report was a two-volume inquiry published in 1956 by the Government of Madhya Pradesh, based on investigations from 1954–55 under retired Chief Justice Bhawani Shankar Niyogi. The inquiry spanned two state-wide tours, consultations with over 11,000 individuals across 77 locations and 700 villages. The report alleged that missionaries promoted separatism by encouraging tribal identities distinct from Hinduism, supporting movements that raised fears of secessionist demands. Anti-Hindu propaganda was noted in missionary literature and sermons that denigrated Hindu deities, customs, and the caste system, targeting Scheduled Castes and tribals by portraying Hinduism as oppressive.

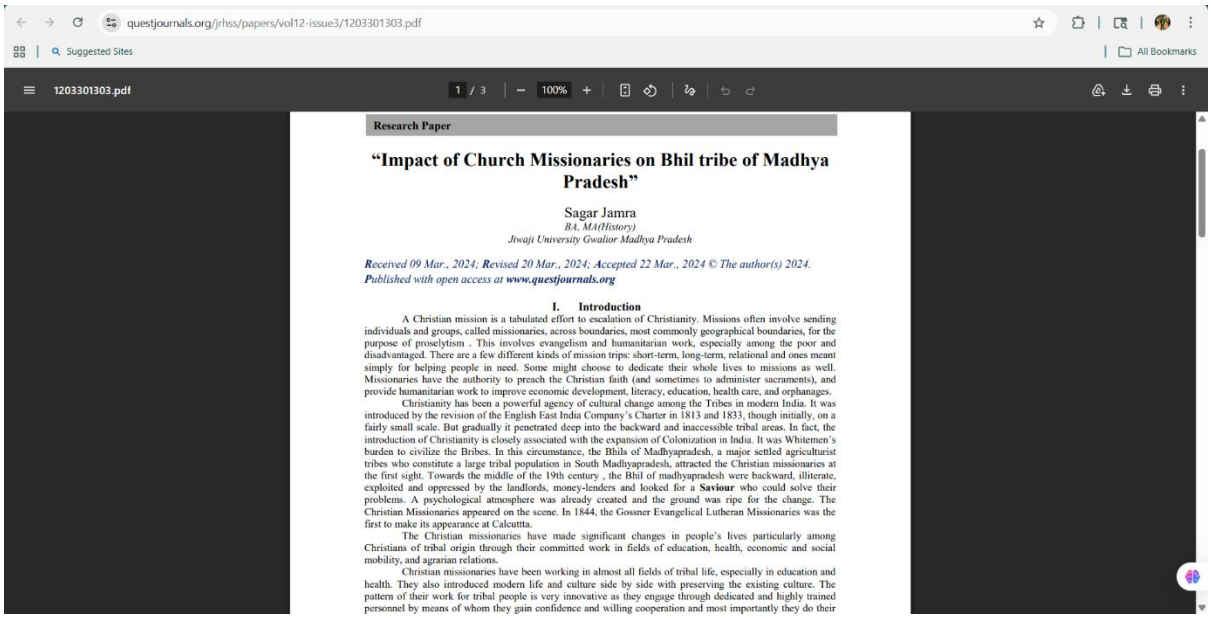
The Niyogi Report directly stated: "The whole history of the foreign missionaries in Chhota-Nagpur reveals how they, under the pretext of taking up the cause of the tribal people, misled them into the belief that they were separate from the Hindu community, that Hindus are aliens and their enemies, the Hindu landlords were their exploiters and oppressors, and turbulent rivalry with the Hindus and the embracing of Christianity were the only possible solutions for their problems — and thus ultimately led them into open feuds with the zamindars and brought about their mass conversions to Christianity."

This is direct, government-documented evidence that the "you are not Hindu" narrative was a deliberate missionary tactic, not an organic Adivasi belief.

📋 Phase 4: Official Government Findings — The Niyogi Report's Conclusions

The Niyogi Committee officially concluded: "Evangelization in India appears to be a part of the uniform world policy to revive Christendom for re-establishing Western supremacy and is not prompted by spiritual motives. The objective is apparently to create Christian minority pockets with a view to disrupt the solidarity of the non-Christian societies, and the mass conversions of a considerable section of Adivasis with this ulterior motive is fraught with danger to the security of the State."

(Reference:- https://www.questjournals.org/jrhss/papers/vol12-issue3/1203301303.pdf)



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Research Paper

"Impact of Church Missionaries on Bhil tribe of Madhya Pradesh"

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I. Introduction

A Christian mission is a tabulated effort to escalation of Christianity. Missions often involve sending individuals and groups, called missionaries, across boundaries, most commonly geographical boundaries, for the purpose of proselytism . This involves evangelism and humanitarian work, especially among the poor and disadvantaged. There are a few different kinds of mission trips: short-term, long-term, relational and ones meant simply for helping people in need. Some might choose to dedicate their whole lives to missions as well. Missionaries have the authority to preach the Christian faith (and sometimes to administer sacraments), and provide humanitarian work to improve economic development, literacy, education, health care, and orphanages.

Christianity has been a powerful agency of cultural change among the Tribes in modern India. It was introduced by the revision of the English East India Company's Charter in 1813 and 1833, though initially, on a fairly small scale. But gradually it penetrated deep into the backward and inaccessible tribal areas. In fact, the introduction of Christianity is closely associated with the expansion of Colonization in India. It was Whitemen's burden to civilize the Bribes. In this circumstance, the Bhils of Madhyapradesh, a major settled agriculturist tribes who constitute a large tribal population in South Madhyapradesh, attracted the Christian missionaries at the first sight. Towards the middle of the 19th century , the Bhil of madhyapradesh were backward, illiterate, exploited and oppressed by the landlords, money-lenders and looked for a **Saviour** who could solve their problems. A psychological atmosphere was already created and the ground was ripe for the change. The Christian Missionaries appeared on the scene. In 1844, the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Missionaries was the first to make its appearance at Calcuttta.

The Christian missionaries have made significant changes in people's lives particularly among Christians of tribal origin through their committed work in fields of education, health, economic and social mobility, and agrarian relations.

Christian missionaries have been working in almost all fields of tribal life, especially in education and health. They also introduced modern life and culture side by side with preserving the existing culture. The pattern of their work for tribal people is very innovative as they engage through dedicated and highly trained personnel by means of whom they gain confidence and willing cooperation and most importantly they do their

The Niyogi Committee concluded that Christian missionaries were inducing low-caste Hindus and Adivasi people to convert with promises of employment, education, or health and other social services.

✅ Phase 5: How it Led to Political Separatism

The Niyogi Report noted: "The separatist tendency that has gripped the mind of the aboriginals under the influence of the Lutheran and Roman Catholic missions is entirely due to the consistent policy pursued by the British Government and the Missionaries. The final segregation of the aborigines in the Census of 1931 from the main body of the Hindus, considered along with the recommendations of the Simon Commission incorporated in the Government of India Act 1935, set the stage for the demand for a separate state of Jharkhand on the lines of Pakistan."

(Reference- https://southasiajournal.net/the-history-of-christianisation-of-rural-and-tribal-population-in-eastern-indian-states)

This is extraordinary — even the demand for Jharkhand as a separate state was linked by the official report to missionary-driven separatism.

⚖️ Phase 6: The Report's Key Recommendations

The Niyogi Committee recommended: missionaries whose primary object is proselytization should be asked to withdraw; the large influx of foreign missionaries should be checked; the use of medical or other professional services as a direct means of making conversions should be prohibited by law; and attempts to convert by force, fraud, or material inducements should be absolutely prohibited.

📌 Summary Table of Authentic Sources

Source	Type	Key Finding
Niyogi Committee Report, 1956	Official Govt. of MP Report	Missionaries deliberately told Adivasis "you are not Hindu" to isolate and convert them
Gossner Lutheran Mission records	Academic (Academia.edu)	Education used as conversion tool in Chota Nagpur
South Asia Journal	Academic Journal	Missionaries entered tribal areas using schools & hospitals as entry points
Quest Journals — Bhil Tribe Study	Research Paper	Missionaries were functionaries of British colonial empire
Butler University Digital Commons	Academic Paper	Niyogi Report shows conversion was tied to colonial-era anxieties about national unity

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🔑 The Bottom Line

The "we are not Hindu" idea did not come from Adivasi culture. It was:

1. Introduced by British colonial census policies (separating tribes from Hindus officially in 1931)
2. Spread by missionaries who needed Adivasis to first reject their identity before accepting Christianity
3. Documented by India's own government (Niyogi Report, 1956) as a deliberate strategy to create minority pockets and weaken national solidarity
4. Continued today through foreign-funded NGOs and certain political groups who benefit from a divided Adivasi community

3. How Did the Sarna Movement Begin?

Sarnaism emerged as a religious identity in the 1930s, when tribal activists in the Chotanagpur region of Bihar claimed a collective indigenous identity as Adivasis. They crafted a unified religious identity for the diverse, nature-based ancestral traditions of tribal communities, with the aim of asserting Adivasi distinctiveness from mainstream religions like Hinduism, Christianity, or Islam.

This movement started with a genuine and understandable goal — **to protect Adivasi culture from erasure.** That is legitimate. **But today, some people are misusing this sentiment for political and divisive purposes,** which is where the real harm begins.

4. What Do the Numbers Say?

Over 89% of Adivasis consider themselves Hindu and practice Hinduism. Only about 5.53% have converted to Christianity, largely due to missionary activity.

This is a clear majority. The "we are not Hindu" narrative is a **minority position being artificially amplified** through political and external funding.

5. Genetic / DNA Evidence

Science Confirms: Adivasis and Other Indians Share Ancient Common Ancestry

Study 1: PLoS ONE — Bhil, Bharia & Sahariya Tribes of Madhya Pradesh (2012)

> This peer-reviewed study published in PLoS ONE specifically examined the genetic ancestries of three tribal populations — Bharia, Bhil, and Sahariya — inhabiting Madhya Pradesh. The study concluded: "Bhil exhibited largely Indo-European specific ancestry, while Sahariya and Bharia showed an admixed genetic package of Indo-European and Austroasiatic populations. Hence, in a landscape like India, linguistic label doesn't unequivocally follow the genetic footprints."
> **What this means:** The Bhil tribe of MP — your region — carries **the same genetic ancestry as other Indians.** They are not a racially separate people. Science has proven civilizational unity.
> Reference-
> https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22393414/

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PLoS One. 2012;7(2):e32546. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0032546. Epub 2012 Feb 29.
Genetic affinities of the central Indian tribal populations
Gunjan Sharma [1], Rakesh Tamang, Ruchira Chaudhary, Vipin Kumar Singh, Anish M Shah, Sharath Anugula, Deepa Selvi Rani, Alla G Reddy, Muthukrishnan Eaaswarkhanth, Gyaneshwer Chaubey, Lalji Singh, Kumarasamy Thangaraj
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PMID: 22393414 PMCID: PMC3290590 DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0032546
Abstract
Background: The central Indian state Madhya Pradesh is often called as 'heart of India' and has
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6. The Northeast Warning

The Demographic Transformation — Census Data

The Indian government canceled World Vision's FCRA license after initially suspending it in 2022. World Vision had a presence in more than 6,000 "urban, rural and tribal communities" across India. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs' FCRA website, about 16,000 NGOs and associations hold active FCRA licenses as of April 2024.

The Northeast story follows a single documented pattern over 120 years:

State	Christian % in 1901	Christian % Today	Separatist Movement
Nagaland	Less than 1%	87.93%	NSCN — "Nagaland for Christ"
Mizoram	Less than 3%	87.16%	Past MNF insurgency
Manipur	Around 2%	41.29%	Multiple separatist groups
Meghalaya	Small minority	74.59%	Growing separatist demands

7. Warning for Chattisgarh and Jharkhand

What Was Happening?

During British colonial rule in India (early 1900s), Christian missionaries — people sent by churches to spread Christianity — came to certain regions of India. Specifically, they focused on:

The Central Provinces (a region in central India under British administration)

Parts of what is now Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand (states in central/eastern India)

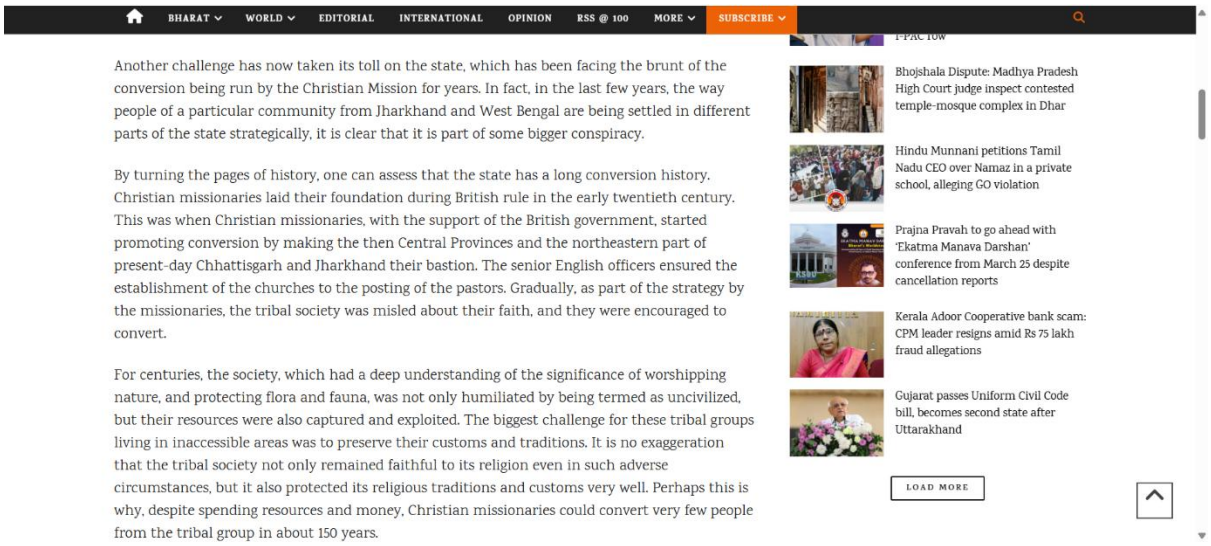
Key Concepts Explained

Missionaries: Religious workers whose goal is to convert people to their faith, often also providing education or healthcare as part of their outreach.

British Government Support: The colonial administration actively *helped* missionaries by building churches and assigning pastors (Christian religious leaders) to these areas. This gave missionaries significant institutional power.

tribal Communities: These regions were home to *indigenous tribal populations* with their own distinct beliefs and traditions, separate from mainstream Hinduism.

Reference:-https://organiser.org/2021/09/07/20380/bharat/chhattisgarh-on-a-double-edged-sword-of-conversion/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Another challenge has now taken its toll on the state, which has been facing the brunt of the conversion being run by the Christian Mission for years. In fact, in the last few years, the way people of a particular community from Jharkhand and West Bengal are being settled in different parts of the state strategically, it is clear that it is part of some bigger conspiracy.
By turning the pages of history, one can assess that the state has a long conversion history. Christian missionaries laid their foundation during British rule in the early twentieth century. This was when Christian missionaries, with the support of the British government, started promoting conversion by making the then Central Provinces and the northeastern part of present-day Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand their bastion. The senior English officers ensured the establishment of the churches to the posting of the pastors. Gradually, as part of the strategy by the missionaries, the tribal society was misled about their faith, and they were encouraged to convert.
For centuries, the society, which had a deep understanding of the significance of worshipping nature, and protecting flora and fauna, was not only humiliated by being termed as uncivilized, but their resources were also captured and exploited. The biggest challenge for these tribal groups living in inaccessible areas was to preserve their customs and traditions. It is no exaggeration that the tribal society not only remained faithful to its religion even in such adverse circumstances, but it also protected its religious traditions and customs very well. Perhaps this is why, despite spending resources and money, Christian missionaries could convert very few people from the tribal group in about 150 years.
Bhojshala Dispute: Madhya Pradesh High Court judge inspect contested temple-mosque complex in Dhar
Hindu Munnani petitions Tamil Nadu CEO over Namaz in a private school, alleging GO violation
Prajna Pravah to go ahead with 'Ekatma Manava Darshan' conference from March 25 despite cancellation reports
Kerala Adoor Cooperative bank scam: CPM leader resigns amid Rs 75 lakh fraud allegations
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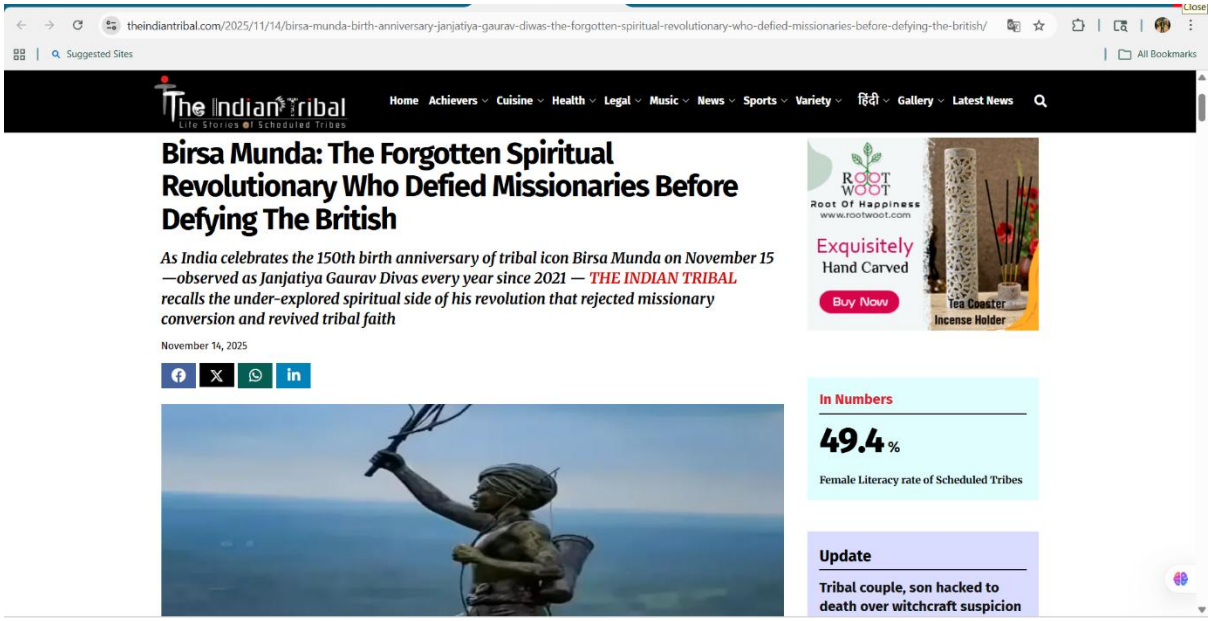
8. Birsa Munda's Own Words Against Missionaries

India's Greatest Adivasi Hero Directly Opposed Missionary Activity

When missionaries criticized tribal rebels, Birsa confronted them and was expelled from school. At that turning point in his life he exclaimed: "Saheb, saheb ek topi hai" — meaning "all whites, the British and the missionaries, wear the same cap." Soon after leaving school, Birsa and his family left Chaibasa and gave up their membership in the German mission.

Reference:- https://theindiantribal.com/2025/11/14/birsa-munda-birth-anniversary-janjatiya-gaurav-diwas-the-forgotten-spiritual-revolutionary-who-defied-missionaries-before-defying-the-british/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Update
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9. Foreign Funding of NGOs in Tribal Areas

The Government-Documented Money Trail Behind the Division Narrative

🏛️ Business Standard — Official FCRA Data (April 2024)

As of April 3, 2024, there are 16,242 NGOs operating with active FCRA licenses. The licenses of 20,701 NGOs have been cancelled for a variety of reasons since 1976, including non-compliance with the FCRA Act, misuse of foreign contributions, and involvement in activities against the national interest or security of India.

Reference:- https://www.business-standard.com/finance/personal-finance/why-20-701-ngos-lost-their-fcra-licences-since-1976-cause-impact-decoded-124041200227_1.html

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To accept foreign contribution/donation from a 'foreign source', obtaining prior permission or an FCRA registration licence from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is mandatory
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The Money Trail in Simple Terms:

Step	What Happens
Foreign church organizations send money	Through FCRA-registered NGOs
NGOs operate in tribal areas	Schools, hospitals, community programs
"You are not Hindu" narrative pushed	Alongside welfare services
Community splits, conversions follow	Identity separated from India
Government cancels FCRA license	As documented above
Process continues informally	Through unregistered channels

10. Missionaries Convert People But Tell Them to Keep Hindu Names — The "Crypto-Christian" Strategy

What Is This Strategy?

This is one of the most documented yet least discussed tactics in missionary conversion activity in India. The strategy works in three steps:

Step 1 — Convert the person to Christianity in faith and practice Step 2 — Instruct them NOT to change their Hindu name on official documents Step 3 — The converted person remains "Hindu on paper" while practicing Christianity in secret

This creates what is officially called a "Crypto-Christian" — a person who is Christian in belief and worship but Hindu names in all government records. This make very difficult to government to track if any conversion process happening in different areas of the country.

Why This Strategy Is Particularly Dangerous for Adivasis

This tactic is especially harmful for Adivasi communities for three specific reasons:

Harm	Explanation
Census manipulation	Real number of converted Adivasis never shows in official data — so the problem appears smaller than it is
Reservation fraud	Converted Adivasis continue claiming ST reservation benefits meant for those maintaining original identity

Harm	Explanation
Real Adivasi population undercounted	Genuine practicing Adivasis lose their proportional political representation
Culture destroyed invisibly	Since conversion is hidden, the community cannot even identify who has been converted and separated from their roots

11. The Niyogi Committee Report (*Report of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee)*

The **Niyogi Committee Report**, officially known as the *Report of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee*, was published by the Government of Madhya Pradesh in **1956**.

Chaired by **Dr. M. Bhawani Shankar Niyogi**, a retired Chief Justice of the Nagpur High Court, the committee was formed in 1954 following allegations of forced or fraudulent religious conversions, particularly among tribal and backward communities.

Key Findings of the Report

The committee conducted a massive enquiry, contacting over 11,000 people and visiting 700 villages. Its primary findings included:

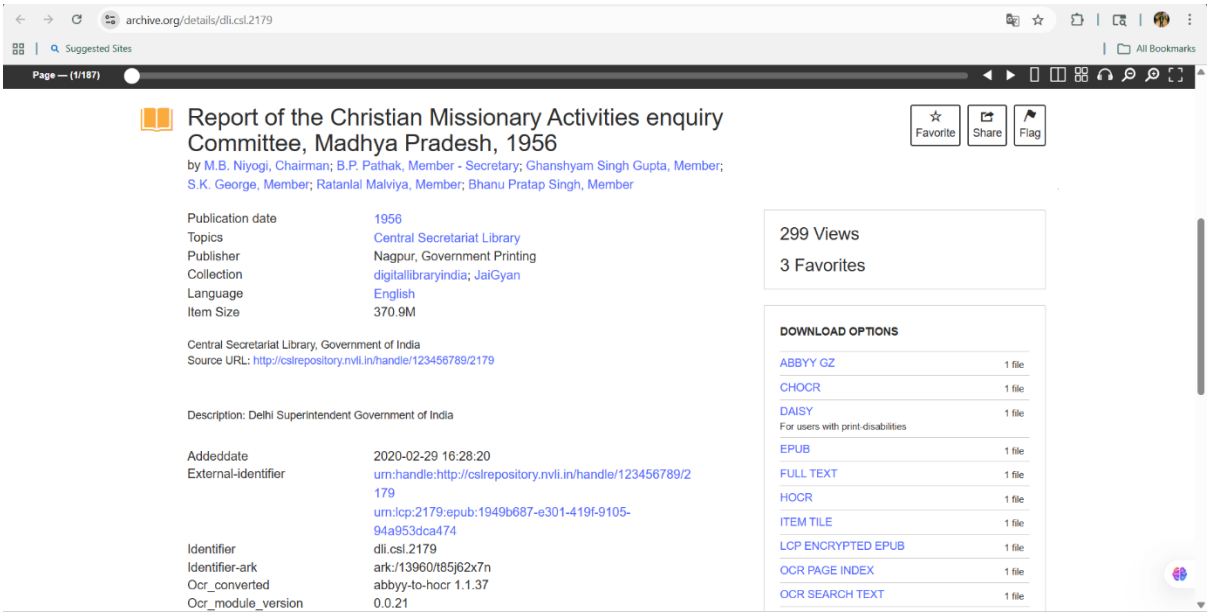
- **Institutional Conversion:** It noted that schools, hospitals, and orphanages were often used as primary tools for proselytization rather than purely social service.
- **Material Inducements:** The report highlighted instances where Roman Catholic missions used money-lending as a device; loans were sometimes written off if the debtor converted to Christianity.
- **Political Concerns:** The committee concluded that mass conversions often disrupted the social solidarity of non-Christian societies and could potentially undermine loyalty to the State, viewing some missionary activities as a "force for politicization."
- **Foreign Influence:** It expressed concern over the large influx of foreign missionaries and foreign funding (estimated at ₹25 crores annually at the time) used for conversion projects.

Major Recommendations

1. **Legislative Control:** Enacting laws to prohibit conversions brought about by force, fraud, or material inducements.

2. **Constitutional Amendment:** Amending the Constitution to clarify that the "right to propagate" religion is limited to Indian citizens and does not include the right to convert by illicit means.
3. **Withdrawal of Missionaries:** Asking foreign missionaries whose primary object was proselytization to withdraw from the country.
4. **Professional Neutrality:** Prohibiting the use of medical and professional services as a direct means for securing converts.

Reference:- https://archive.org/details/dli.csl.2179



12. The Deep Connection Between Adivasi Culture and Hindu Tradition

Tribal groups have been part of Indian civilization since the times of the Ramayana and Mahabharata. They have their own distinct lifestyles and customs, along with a rich history, heritage, and traditions. Journalofpoliticalscience

Look at these iconic examples from Indian history and scripture:

Figure	Identity	Significance
Shabari	Bhil tribal woman	Devoted devotee of Lord Ram
Nishad Raj Guha	Tribal king	Ram's closest friend
Eklavya	Forest tribal	The greatest archer in Mahabharata

Figure	Identity	Significance
Birsa Munda	Adivasi leader	Fought British & land exploiters — never rejected Indian spiritual roots

These are not outsiders to Hindu tradition. They **are** the tradition.

Who Actually Gets Hurt When Adivasis Say "We Are Not Hindu"?

Loss	How It Happens
Adivasi unity breaks	The community fragments into smaller, weaker groups
Conversions increase	Missionaries get a direct opening
Political power weakens	Divided votes = no real representation
Cultural heritage at risk	Roots are cut, traditions fade
Land & forest rights weaken	Outside forces exploit the internal chaos

The people who gain from this division are **not Adivasis** — they are missionaries, foreign-funded NGOs, and political parties who need a fragmented tribal vote bank.

What Should the Correct Approach Be?

The debate of **"Hindu or not Hindu"** is itself the wrong question — and that is exactly what the dividers want you to argue about. The real questions Adivasis should be asking are:

1. **How do we protect our language, traditions, and culture?**
2. **How do we strengthen our rights over Jal, Jungle, Zameen (water, forest, land)?**
3. **Why are outside forces — missionaries, politicians — trying to create divisions among us?**

By reclaiming their Adivasi identity in its truest form, Scheduled Tribe communities of India can preserve their rich cultural practices and way of life — without needing to reject their deep civilizational bonds with the rest of India.

Final Message

To those Adivasis who say "we are not Hindu," the honest, historically grounded response is:

"Your distinct identity is real and must be protected — absolutely. But by saying 'we are not Hindu,' you are completing the very mission that the British and missionaries started: breaking your own people apart. The real fight is for your water, forests, land, and culture

— not for a religious label that only divides you. Your ancestors — Shabari, Eklavya, Birsa Munda — never needed to deny their roots to assert their greatness. Neither do you."

🧭 Summary in One Line

The "we are not Hindu" movement was born in a colonial office and is kept alive by those who benefit from a divided, weakened Adivasi community. Unity is the Adivasi's greatest strength — division is their greatest enemy.